

Press release

26 April 2013

Passive House Conference presents solutions for the energy revolution

PassREg workshops for the future of construction and retrofitting in Europe

Frankfurt, Germany. Energy-efficient and cost-effective: this is how the future of construction and retrofitting will look, as demonstrated at the 2013 International Passive House Conference in Frankfurt, Germany. Using examples of completed projects, experts from all over the world revealed the potential of intelligent architecture for climate protection and cost savings. The spectrum of topics ranged from a "historical" new build in an old-town district of Frankfurt itself, to the demands of a Passive House factory in China.

More than 1000 Passive House experts from around 50 countries attended the Conference, a long-established event in the energy-efficient construction sector. Large delegations came from China, amongst other countries. Representatives from the Front Runner Regions involved in the PassREg project (Passive House Regions with Renewable Energies – www.passreg.eu) presented their ground-breaking concepts. In the university city of Heidelberg, located about one hundred kilometres south of Frankfurt, an entire city district with an area of 116 hectares is currently being built in accordance with the Passive House Standard. These regions show that Passive House is well on its way to becoming a mainstream building standard throughout European countries.

Under the motto "Building for the energy revolution", the PassReg project investigates front runner regions which have successfully implemented Nearly Zero Energy concepts using Passive House supplied as much as possible by renewable energies as the foundation. The lessons learned and the solutions applied in these regions serve as a basis to be adapted and implemented in other regions across Europe. The project, headed up by the Passive House Institute, thus supports the implementation of the European Buildings Directive and makes an important contribution to the achievement of the EU's efficiency objectives for 2020. The latest developments and project findings were discussed by the PassREg project partners during a meeting held just prior to the Passive House Conference.

1

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The fact that the Passive House Standard is becoming more and more established is essentially due to the increased availability of high quality energy-efficient building components. Many of these components were presented at the Exhibition taking place parallel to the Conference on 19 and 20 April, including windows that can withstand the demands of extremely cold climates and windows with particularly light multi-pane glazing. The application of such products in retrofits, combined with renewable energies, will be developed further in the EU project EuroPHit, launched within the framework of the Conference. EuroPHit will see clear criteria defined for each of the steps in the retrofitting process with an eye to integrated design, ensuring that all disciplines involved are more closely linked with one another.

"Efficiency is the key to the success of the energy revolution," explains building physicist Feist. The reason is simple: energy not consumed in the first place needn't be extracted from sources that are more or less problematic. In Germany, more than one third of total energy demand goes towards the running of buildings. Yet up to 90 % of heating energy can be saved with Passive House. "If we are able to increase the energy efficiency of buildings to Passive House level on a large scale, then sustainable energy supply will become possible, even with rising prosperity worldwide," says Feist.

The Passive House Conference organised by the Passive House Institute has been taking place at various venues for the last 17 years. This is the second time that Frankfurt am Main has hosted the Conference, the first time being in 2009. This also illustrates Frankfurt's leading role in energy-efficient construction; with effective policy support, more than 1000 apartments, as well as numerous schools, kindergartens and other non-residential buildings built to the Passive House Standard have been constructed here so far. The 18th International Passive House Conference is planned for 25 and 26 April in Aachen, Germany.

Further information regarding the International Passive House Conference can be found at: www.passivehouseconference.org

Sign the New Way of Building Memorandum: www.memorandum-NeuesBauen.com/en
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17TH INTERNATIONAL PASSIVE HOUSE CONFERENCE 2013

2

